
Distinguished Visitor Orientation Tour and Orientation Tour Program

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Since October of 2001 the International Student Management Office (IMSO) has supported the Distinguished Visitor Orientation Tour (DVOT) and Orientation Tour (OT) Program. A DVOT/OT is a hand-tailored, short, intensive training program specifically designed to familiarize selected international military officers and ministry civilians to the types of training provided by U.S. security assistance International Military Education and Training (IMET), Expanded-International Military Education and Training (E-IMET), and foreign military sales (FMS) programs that can help meet their defense requirements. Men and women who currently hold, or who are destined to hold key decision-making military and ministry positions, are selected to participate. The tour is conducted in the United States. A tour is designated a DVOT when a member of the international delegation is a general flag officer or civilian equivalent.

The Distinguished Visitor Orientation Tour and Orientation Tours have traditionally been used to familiarize select international military personnel to U.S. military training and doctrine through IMET and FMS, but now these tours can be used to familiarize select international military officers and ministry civilians to security assistance Expanded-IMET courses and mobile training that can meet their country's unique civilian training requirements. Furthermore, DVOT/OT's can provide an opportunity for the officials of a country new to U.S. security assistance to come to the United States and learn first hand about U.S. security assistance, how it works and the variety of training offered. While in the United States, these officials can meet their counterparts in the Department of Defense, Department of State and other U.S. government departments and build working relationships.

The Distinguished Visitor Orientation Tour and Orientation Tours may be one of the first security assistance training programs for a new or transitioning country. Mid-level to high-level international military officers and ministry civilians of a country's new or transitioning government or military establishment often seek assistance in learning how to better manage their country's defense resources, improve civil-military relations, strengthen civilian control of the armed forces and democracy, or manage and train their armed forces. Orientation Tours provide a time-sensitive way for these officials to receive the information they need in order to develop long-range solutions to these and other issues.

A List of Distinguished Visitor Orientation Tours

Country	Focus of Orientation Tour
Germany	U.S. Army Transformation
Egypt	U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force Training Methods
South Africa	U.S. Military and Government Inspector General Offices
Slovenia	Department of Defense Personnel
Russia	IMET, E-IMET and PME Re-orientation
South Africa	Finance and HR Training of New Commissioned Officers
Argentina	Professional Military Education
Azerbaijan	New Country Security Assistance Training Orientation
Hungary	New Ministry of Defense's Orientation to U.S. Security Assistance
Mongolia	Inspector General and Auditing

For U.S. foreign policy, U.S. security assistance DOVT/OT's serve to initiate, if not strengthen and deepen friendly relations with international militaries and civilian governments through direct and continued access to U.S. military training facilities and U.S. government departments through the U.S. security assistance training program.

Distinguished Visitor Orientation Tour and Orientation Tour consists of visits to military training facilities, schools and government agencies where the relevant expertise resides. The briefings are thorough, interactive, and informative with opportunities to observe dynamic training first-hand. The tour itineraries are generally intensive and travel may cover much of the geographic United States. A typical tour may involve approximately ten visits in fourteen days. During the tour, delegates are exposed to the American people, culture and landscape through Informational Programs.

Orientation Tours can last from one to two weeks, and are limited to no more than five DVOT participants or seven Orientation Tour participants excluding a U.S. escort officer and translators. Orientation Tours can be funded by IMET, FMS or other sources.

Requests for Orientation Tours are made by the interested countries' Security Assistance Office, Office of Defense Cooperation, U.S. Defense Attaché or foreign ministry of defense. The Orientation Tour request is programmed through the U.S. Army Security Assistance Training Field Activity and executed by the National Defense University, Fort McNair, Washington D.C.

About the Author

Yvonne D. Eaton is the U.S. Security Assistance Distinguished Visitors Orientation Tours/Orientation Tours Program Manager at the National Defense University. She has a B.A. from San Francisco State University, a Master's from Dartmouth College and from the University of Denver and a certificate from Cambridge University. She has worked as a political analyst and a human rights researcher; resettlement coordinator for war-displaced and repatriated persons and teacher of English as a second language and U.S. studies to non-Americans.